

Diarrhoea claims 27, attacks 4000

MADARIPUR, Jan 27: Diarrhoea claimed 27 lives and affected 4000 other people in four thanas of the district during the last three weeks, unofficial sources said, reports UNB.

Official sources confirmed seven deaths and attacked 520 people of the water-borne disease.

According to local people, 11 people died and 2,000 were attacked in Rajoir thana during the period while four people died and 450 were attacked in Shibchar, five died and 500 were attacked in Kalkini and seven died and 1200 were attacked in Sadar thana.

Medical sources said, many diarrhoeal and other intestinal diseases patients have been coming to sadar hospital everyday for treatment. Consumption of adulterated food and taking of impure water were said to be the main reasons behind the outbreak of the diseases.

Local people alleged that supply of oral saline packets is quite insufficient in the affected areas.

Contraband worth Tk 15 lakh seized

RAJSHAHI, Jan 27: The BDR personnel seized Indian contrabands including cattle-heads worth about Taka 15 lakh by conducting raids at Tangon, Char Shyampur and Dargah Para of the district Wednesday, an official source said, reports BSS.

The smuggled goods were deposited with the customs authorities.

Robbers open fire on shopkeepers, 22 seriously hurt

JAMALPUR, Jan 27: Twenty-two people were injured when armed dacoits attacked a market in Bakshiganj thana of the district Wednesday night, reports UNB.

Police said, a gang of 20 to 25 miscreants equipped with firearms raided some 20 shops in Sharmara Bazar shortly after midnight and looted cash and goods worth Tk 33 lakh.

The dacoits opened fire as some businessmen tried to resist them. Five people were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital with bullet wounds. Seventeen others were given first aid at Bakshiganj Health Complex.

Clash over kidnapping of a girl leaves seven hurt

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 27: Seven people were injured, one seriously, in a clash between the kidnapers and the villagers in Shahjadpur thana following the alleged rape of a school girl early Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said, Fakhri Islam of village Puratan Tepri and his accomplices abducted a 15-year-old girl from her house Monday night and allegedly violated her at a house in a neighbouring village.

After learning of his sister's abduction, Abu Shama with the help of his villagers soon made an attempt to rescue her from the house of Golam Mowla at village Tepri.

But they were driven back by the kidnapers and seven people were injured in the clash. Of them, Abu Shama was admitted to Shahjadpur thana health complex.

Later, at about 4 am Tuesday, police raided the house of Golam Mowla and rescued the girl, a student of class nine. But her kidnappers were absconding, police said.

Gas reserve may be unearthed in Jhenidah

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: Prospect of availability of natural gas is bright at village Meererhuda in Sadar thana of the district, reports UNB.

According to local people, Azirbar Mondal of the village employed some labourers last week to install a tubewell at his house. But after frantic efforts they failed to find water layer. Instead they found something like smoke was coming out from the mouth of the drilling pipe.

The curious labourers then enkindled the smoke which started blazing. People from nearby areas witnessed the blazing. The matter was informed to the local administration.

Local Naldanga UP chairman Alauddin said gas reserve may be unearthed after proper drilling.



SYLHET: Queue of female voters at the Ambarkhana Government Primary School centre during the Sylhet pourashava elections held on January 22. — Star photo

Fishermen in Natore face numerous problem

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Jan 27: About 31 thousand fishermen's families in Natore district and in the vast Chalan beel areas have been leading a miserable life and facing manifold problems in carrying out their ancestral profession due to high prices of fishing materials and scarcity of the materials, want of fund, discharging poisonous wastes into 'Narod' river from different mills.

Most of these fishermen are now being compelled to give up their profession. Pisciculture in the six thanas of the district and the Chalan beel areas has been largely affected due to drying up of a number of water-bodies here, for unexpected drought and less rainfall.

As a result, the fish of the large Chalan beel — the greatest store-house of fish in the country has turned into a desert.

Siltation of the 40 kilometre long Narod river in the district is also affecting the pisciculture in this region.

Narod river has become not only fish-less but also all types of living creatures has disappeared as a result of discharge

ing poisonous wastes from Jamuna Distillery into the river.

About 2 thousand metric tons of fishes per year were caught from the river during 1980 to 1984 year.

Though releasing poisonous wastes into river violates the Fish Preservation Law approved in 1950, no case has been filed in this connection in last 8 to 10 years so far.

Besides, the fish releasing Programme of the Fisheries Department at Haldi beel of Natore and Naogaon districts under 3rd Fisheries Project has been closed on account of dissatisfaction of the main donor agency — World Bank.

A reliable source said that the main cause of deducting the beel from the project is most of the Jalmahals of the beel areas were not in possession of genuine fishermen.

The fishermen of the district and Chalan beel areas are passing their days in extreme hardship due to shortage of capital, in absence of adequate loan from the banks, they are to borrow money from money-lenders at a high rate of interest to buy their fishing appli-

ances including boats and nets.

Some fishermen informed The Daily Star that the bank loan sanctioned to the fishermen is quite inadequate and it is very difficult to get the loans.

Meanwhile, many non-professional fishermen have taken up the profession for their survival. Most of the water-bodies here are leased out to the non-professionals. But there is an existing law in the country providing for leasing out the beels and jalmahals to the genuine fishermen. However, the law has not come into force here as yet.

It is alleged that some lease holder in collaboration with the local vested groups are giving sub-lease to the fake fishermen.

It is also alleged that the non-professionals are catching fishes by force and even they take away the nets and boats from the professional fishermen.

Many fishermen has already given up their profession and are working as a day labourers.

Local people have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps for saving these fishermen.



SYLHET: The children are warming their hands in extreme cold prevailing in the district. — Star photo

Plan to instal 938 tubewells in M'bazar

From Our Correspondent

MOULVI BAZAR, Jan 27: Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) Moulvi bazar has taken up a scheme to instal 938 various types of tubewells under 'pure water supply programme' in the six thanas of Moulvibazar district during current financial year.

Official source said, the scheme will be funded by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Estimated cost for sinking of each shallow tubewell is Taka seven thousand five hundred, each tara-pump costs Taka ten thousand and each ring-well cost Taka 80 thousand.

The source added that, of the total tubewells 121 shallow will be sunk under unserved/underserved pocket

area programme, 354 shallow will be sunk under development and renovation programme, 206 tara pump will be sunk under deep water level area programme, 167 shallow will be sunk under slum and suburbs area programme and 90 ring-wells will be sunk under hilly area water supply programme.

Besides this, the PHED will distribute 7,550 slabs and 22650 rings for ensuring sanitary toilet to the rural and slum people.

On the other hand, the PHED has taken up another project involving Taka one crore 21 lakh to introduce water supply through pipe lines in the Srimongal pourasava area of the Moulvibazar district.

Outlawed party members kill night guard

From Our Correspondent

MEHERPUR, Jan 27: Miscreants killed a night guard and wounded another at Islamnagar village in Gangni thana early Thursday, reports UNB.

Villagers said the assailants swooped on three nightguards and knifed to death Arshed Ali, 35, while they were patrolling the village at midnight.

The injured Nurunabi, 30, was admitted to Gangni Health Complex with serious wounds.

Police suspected that the miscreants were the members of outlawed parties.

A case was filed with the local police. Another report adds: Dacoits broke into the Government Veterinary Hospital near Gangni bus stand and looted equipments worth about Tk one lakh early today.



SYLHET: The South Surma area looked deserted during the 48-hour hartal on January 21 and 22 in protest against the pourashava election. Over 13,000 voters of ward number 12 and 13 boycotted the election protesting the inclusion of the area within the pourashava boundary. The voters of the wards (12,13) were demanding a new thana named, South Surma. — Star photo

OMS functioning smoothly in Barisal Division

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 27: Four thousand and two hundred metric tons of rice and three thousand metric tons of wheat were sold in six southern districts under Open Market Sale (OMS) programme in three months till December, reports BSS.

According to regional food controller office sources, these grains were sold through 126 centres in 38 thanas of Barisal Division.

Rice was sold at the rate of Tk 10.50 per kilogram and wheat at the rate of Tk 7 per kilogram.

Of the total 1,125 metric tons of rice and 891 metric tons of wheat were sold in Barisal district, 221 metric tons of rice and 177 metric tons of wheat in Jhalakati, 657 metric tons of rice and 521 metric tons of wheat in Bholia, 671 metric tons of rice and 483 metric tons of wheat in Pirojpur, 879 metric tons of rice and 534 metric tons of wheat in Patuakhali and 716 metric tons of rice and 534 metric tons of wheat in Barguna districts.

The stock position of the grains in the division is stated to be satisfactory, the source added.

High prices of inputs, IRRI, boro cultivation affected

SATKHIRA, Jan 27: Cultivation of IRRI Boro and other rabi crops has been hampering due to high labour cost and high prices of inputs including fertilizers, reports UNB.

The prices of fertilizers, insecticides and other inputs have shot up in the last few months and finding no other way out, local farmers are using low quality Indian fertilizers and insecticides.

Agricultural Extension Department said use of low quality India made agricultural inputs, pest attack and insufficient rainfall have been hampering the cultivation.

The farmers said though government recently refixed the prices of fertilizers and insecticides no significant impact is visible in the market.

They alleged that no step has been taken to stop selling of substandard fertilizers and insecticides by the concerned authorities. They said the target of production this season would not be achieved.

On the other hand, the farmers are facing problems to take care of the standing crops due high labour cost.

Toll collectors harass farmers, traders

From Our Correspondent

MADARIPUR, Jan 27: Poor farmers and small traders alleged that they are being harassed by some toll collectors at different hats and bazars in the district, reports UNB.

They said the lease-holders of different markets including Khasher Hat, Utrali Hat, Faswata Hat, Shashiker Hat, Rajoir Hat, Taker Hat and Mostafapur Hat are collecting tolls three to four times higher than the rate fixed by the government different hats.

They also alleged that the toll collectors are not providing any receipt against collection of tolls and they do not maintain the required chart for the tolls.

The traders said in collaboration with some dishonest officials the lease-holders taken undue benefit by collecting tolls at high rates.

They said they are paying taxes and tolls regularly but the concerned authorities have not yet taken any schemes for the development of these markets.

They urged the district administration to stop collecting tolls above the rates fixed by the government and take action against its violators.

Prices of vegetables fall Sharp rise in prices of rice, atta

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: The prices of rice, coarse flour and wheat increased while price of vegetables have sharply fallen in different markets of Jhenidah district.

The rice is being sold between Taka 13 and 16 per kilogram. Fine quality of rice is being sold at Taka 17 per kilogram. In different hats and bazars one kilogram of coarse flour which is known as 'atta' is being sold between Taka 10 and 50 paisa and Taka 12. Fine quality of atta at the rate of Taka 14 per kilogram. Further per kilogram of wheat is being sold between Taka 10 and 11.

Due to price hike of essential all classes of people especially the day labourers and low income group people are suffering.

They are not in a position to meet their need with limited income.

Moreover, prices of all types of vegetables have dramatically fallen in the markets since last week. One kilogram of palong shaak is being sold at Taka 1.00 of Taka 4.00, beans at Taka 3.00 instead of Taka 6.00, brinjal at Taka 1.00 instead of Taka 6.00, bacil at Taka 3.00 against Taka 8.00, potato at Taka 4.00 and 5.00 instead of 8.00 per kilogram. A piece of pumpkin is being sold between Taka 2.00 and 4.00 and the last week's price of Taka 8.00.

Due to price fall of vegetables farmers are purchasing the same to use as fodder for their animals like cows, buffaloes etc.

Talking to some growers told that due to small rainfall production increases 2 to 3 times in their lands which compelled them to sale the vegetables at lower price.

According to another report, police arrested 3 notorious snatchers and recovered some stolen goods from village Laxmipur in sadar thana of the district recently. Police said that two pedestrians of village Parmathurapur were returning home and were attacked by a gang of snatchers at Beltala in Sadar thana. The snatcher showing knives snatched valuables for Taka 26 thousand. A case was lodged with police and acting on an information police arrested Tushar, Sobhan, and Sanjit in this connection.

Gangsters create reign of terror in a village

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: An armed gang of men numbering about 150 created reign of terror recently when they attacked the village Naopara, some six kilometres from Saikupa thana of Jhenidah district.

Report says, one Belayet Hossain Salok, 32, was stabbed by some miscreants near Harithara Pashchimpura at about 7-30 pm on December 20 and succumbed to his injuries at Jhenidah sadar hospital.

A case was filed with Saikupa thana in this connection. Next day after burying the deceased, about 150 people started looting, assaulting and damaging crops and valuables of the opponent group.

Villagers say, followers of the deceased numbering about 150 attacked the house of Jalal Khan and damaged his four straw made huts, looted all his belongings including a tubewell. The attackers razed the houses to the ground.

The miscreants then attacked the house of Golam Mustafa at about 8 pm and damaged two tinshed houses and all domestic belongings.

Sikaron Nessa, an old woman aged about 80, told this correspondent that the looters looted their cattle, goats, hens, ducks. They even looted food stuffs from their houses.

The looters then entered into the houses of Sher Ali Biswas and damaged one tinshed house, three straw made houses and looted all belongings on December 25.

Angry looters also looted all belongings from the houses of Kune Biswas including a shallow tubewell machine on rickshaw vans. They even looted clothing.

Goleza Khatun, 72, who refused to give her photograph, alleged that the looters looted goats, hens and goods from the house of Ahmed Ali Master in the night of December 21. They threw away a child from the mother's shelter. Wife of Ahmed Ali Master was also tortured by the looters, she alleged.

Village people said that the looters also looted all belongings from the house of Arman Biswas Nurjahan Begum, 60, wife of Arman Biswas, alleged that even after having assurance from the police they could not save their goods.

The robbers looted valuables worth at least Taka 90 thousand from those houses. At the time of this correspondent's visit, the affected village people alleged that the looters still come to torture female members who do not leave their damaged houses. In the night the looters throw bricks on their houses and loot cooked food. They also threaten to kill the inhabitants.

They said, the males were hiding to avoid unnecessary arrest by police. Some supporters of deceased said that police reportedly looted few valuables. But police said that they had damaged the houses partially for the interest of cases and lootings were done by the supporters of the deceased.

Local people said that valuables worth at least Taka 35 lakh was looted or damaged following the killing incident from the village.

One killed in road mishap

JHENIDAH, Jan 27: A young man was killed while a speedy bus ran over him at Sreepur on the Jhenidah-Kushtia road on January 18, says UNB.

Police said, Alamgir, 22, Supervisor of Anny Poribahan, who boarded the Kushtia bound AB Paribahan, suddenly fell down when the driver stopped the bus to save a bicyclist.

He was rushed to Kushtia sadar hospital where he succumbed on the same day.

Witnesses said another young man, a student of Islamic University, was also injured in the accident.

The driver, however, managed to flee with the bus. A case was filed with the police.

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JHENIDAH: The miscreants reportedly destroys many kucha houses in village, Naopara of the district. The photo shows damaged house of Sher Ali Biswas. — Star photo

Shortage of high yielding variety Cultivation hampered in rural areas of Barisal div

From Our Correspondent

BHOLA, Jan 27: Cultivation is being hampered in the rural areas of Barisal division due to shortage of high yielding variety seeds as government has been closing the seed sales centres since June last year, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, 23 thana sales centres of this division have already been closed and the rest will follow the suit soon as per the decision of the government.

The closed sales centres were at Daulatkhan, Tajamuddin Monpara, Bakerganj, Muladi, Hizla, Banaripara, Pirojpur Sadar, Kalatia, Kawkhali, Nazirpur, Mothbaria, Swarupkathi, Bamna, Betagi, Patharghata, Dasmina, Mirzaganj, Kalapara, Antohi, Jhalakathi Sadar, Nalchhiti and Rajapur thanas of six districts under the division.

Government has taken the decision of closing the sales centres run by Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation, but nothing alternative has yet been done in respect.

Imposter arrested

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Jan 27: Police arrested an impostor who identified himself as an Officer-in-Charge of sadar police station on January 19, reports UNB.

According to police, Mizanur Rahman of Sadla village in Sadar thana was demanding bribe identifying himself as the OC from one Babul Mia of Sreerampur village in Sadar thana.

Babul later informed the matter to the sadar police who arrested the impostor.

A case was registered and further investigation is on.

Another message adds: Police seized smuggled Indian goods worth Tk 1.56 crore raiding different areas in five thanas of the district during the last year.

Police also arrested 34 smugglers during the period. The goods included Indian sarees, gold biscuits, spare parts of vehicles, oranges, sugar, phensidyl, fish and pulses.

A total of 34 cases were registered with the police.